OUR STORY OPENS WITH MADELINE JOYCE ALIAS "MISS AMERICA" ON HER WAY TO HER UNCLE JIM'S HUNTING LODGE IN MAINE...

H-E-L-P!

BR-RR! IT'S COLD! WHAT WAS THAT?

MADELINE INSTANTLY LEAPS FROM HER CAR AND CRASHES THRU THE WOODS...

HELP! HELP! AH-G-G...

BANG!

THE CRY WAS CUT OFF BY THAT SHOT!

SOMEONE'S COMING!
HURRY! INTO THE WOODS BEFORE THEY SEE US!
CRASH!
SHARP EYES AND AGILE MIND TAKE IN THE SITUATION AT A GLANCE . . .
A DEAD MAN AND TWO HUNTERS FLEEING!
A SWIFT CHANGE AND THE FAMOUS TROUBLE SHOOTER TAKES UP THE CHASE . . .
NOT SO FAST! I'M JOINING YOUR LITTLE HUNTING PARTY!
GULP! MISS AMERICA!
NOW, SUPPOSE WE TAKE CARE OF YOUR FAST-SHOOTING COMPANION, EH?
IN THIS FASHION!
YEOW-F-F!
OW-FFF!
MOMENTS LATER...
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
WE'LL LET THE SHERIFF DECIDE THAT! LET'S GO GENTLEMEN!
HE SHOT HIMSELF!

SOMETIME LATER, BACK IN THE WOODS WITH THE SHERIFF ON THE SCENE...
HMM? SO HE WAS A BUSINESS PARTNER OF YOU TWO, EH?
YES! MY NAME'S PAGE! HIS IS MORROW! WE OWN A HUNTING LODGE NEAR THE PINES HOTEL!
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! HE STUMBLED AND DROPPED HIS GUN...IT WENT OFF AND KILLED HIM!
HER CHARGES THAT WE WERE TRYING TO ESCAPE IS UTTERLY FANTASTIC! WE WERE RUNNING FOR HELP!
HMM, I'LL HAVE TROUBLE PROVING MY HUNCH IF THEY STICK TO THAT STORY!
I DEMAND OUR INSTANT RELEASE! YOU HAVE NO PROOF THAT THIS WAS ANYTHING BUT AN ACCIDENT!
YEP! IT LOOKS THAT WAY... NOT ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO HOLD YA!
BETTER STICK AROUND THESE PARTS! YE'LL BE NEEDED AT THE INQUEST!
BE GLAD TO, SHERIFF! WE'LL BE AT OUR HUNTING LODGE!
MISS AMERICA, DETERMINED TO FOLLOW THRU, DECIDES ON A PLAN AND QUICKLY SWITCHES BACK TO MADELINE JOYCE...
I'LL CHECK INTO THE HOTEL AND THEN LOCATE THEIR HUNTING LODGE!
3

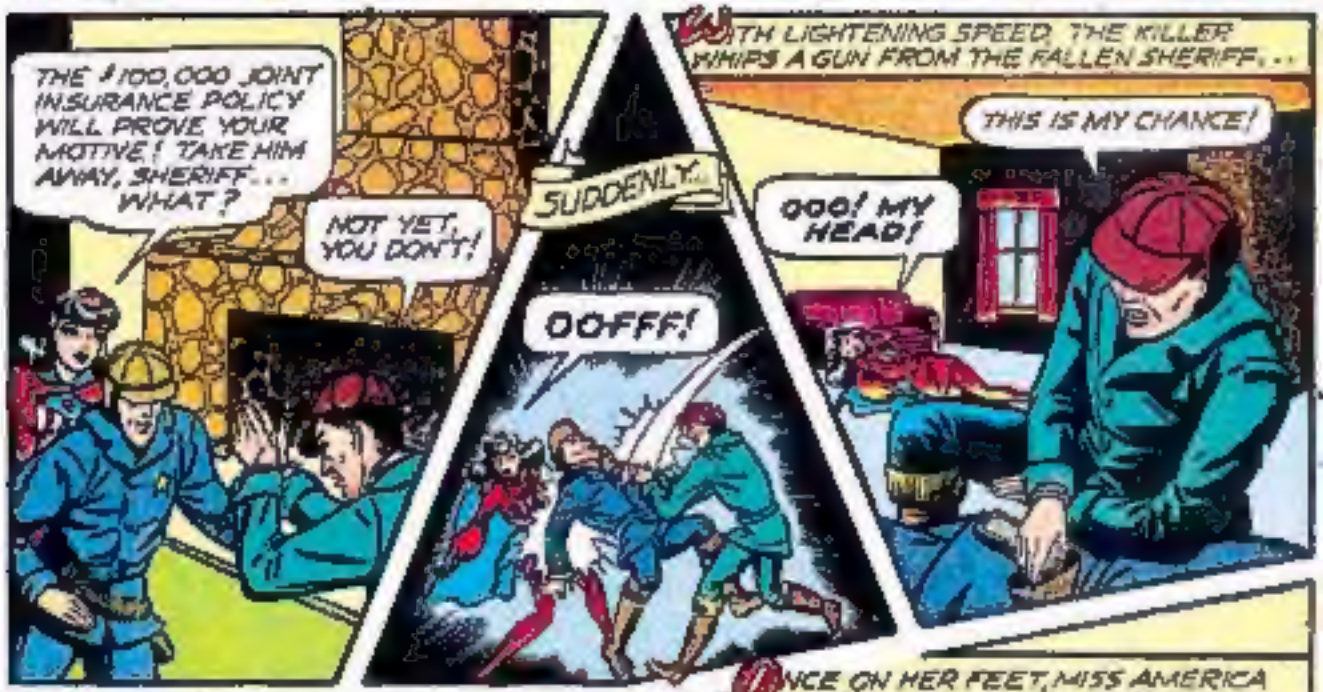
LATER AT THE HOTEL, MADELINE WHIRLS TOWARD A FAMILIAR VOICE...
MR. PAGE! WONDER WHY HE'S TAKING A ROOM?
A ROOM FOR ONE PLEASE!
I'LL WATCH IN MY HAND MIRROR! OH-OH! HERE COMES THE OTHER ONE THRU THE DOOR!
MADELINE, UNSEEN, SLIPS INTO AN ADJOINING BOOTH IN THE HOTEL GRILL...
NOT SO LOUD! PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER! THIS IS NO TIME TO LOOSE YOUR NERVE!
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO? WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
WHY...WHY...JUST FOR A BITE TO EAT! YOU SAID YOU WEREN'T HUNGRY AND I THOUGHT...
YOU'RE LYING! YOU'RE RUNNING OUT ON ME!
I SMELL SOME KIND OF DOUBLE-CROSS! HE LIED TO HIS PARTNER! NOT A WORD ABOUT TAKING A ROOM!
HMM! THAT PAGE IS A SMOOTH ARTICLE! CONVINCED MORROW TO GO BACK TO THE LODGE, AND HE'S COMING BACK IN!

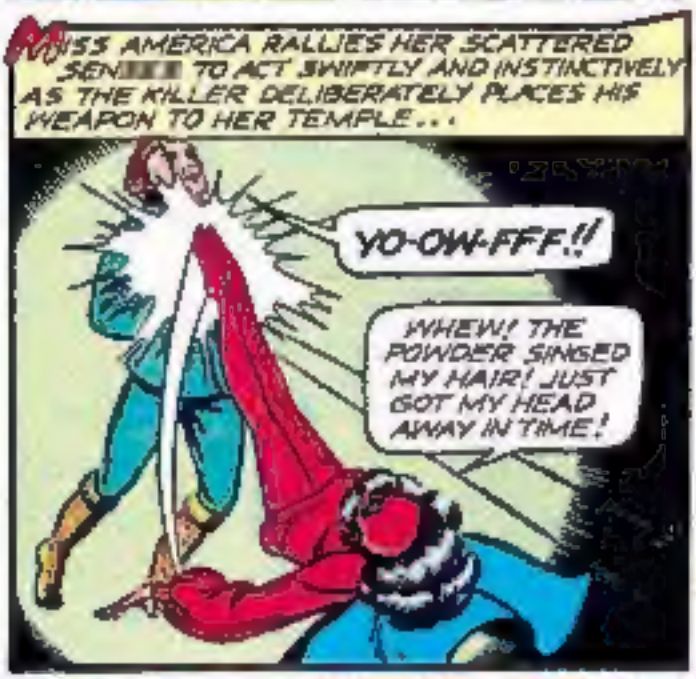
AFTER ASSURING HERSELF THAT PAGE IS SAFE IN HIS ROOM, MADELINE HURRIES TO HERS AND CALLS NEW YORK... WE HEAR HER NOW, TALKING GUARDEDLY TO A HIGH POLICE OFFICIAL...
PAGE, MORROW, AND SUMMERS, EH? OKAY, MISS AMERICA! I'LL GET YOU THE INFORMATION, THOUGH IT MAY TAKE SOME TIME!
I'LL STICK AT THE 'PHONE! CALL ME BACK NO MATTER WHAT TIME!
HOURS LATER, AT DAYBREAK.....
HO-HUM-M! IT FINALLY STOPPED SNOWING! WISH THAT CALL WOULD COME IN! OOPS! THERE IT IS!
RING!
DID YOU SAY "INSURANCE??"
UH-HUH! ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND, TO BE EXACT! A JOINT POLICY IN WHICH THE PARTNERS GET THE MONEY IF THE OTHER DIES!
ONCE AGAIN MADELINE ASSUMES HER FIGHTING ROLE AND HEADS FOR THE HUNTING LODGE...
PAGE IS STILL IN HIS ROOM AT THE HOTEL! IT SHOULD BE EASY TO GET THIS MORON TO CONFESS, ONCE I SPRING MY INFORMATION!
INSIDE THE LODGE, MOMENTS AFTER MISS AMERICA HAS OVERCOME HER SURPRISE AT FINDING THE DEAD BODY OF MORROW.....
NOT BAD, MR. PAGE! NOT BAD AT ALL! ALMOST FELL FOR IT, MYSELF! IT'S GOING TO BE AN ADDED PLEASURE TO HANG YOU FOR DOUBLE MURDER!
5

LATER, MISS AMERICA QUICKLY SUMMONS THE SHERIFF AND CLIPS ORDERS AT THE LAW OFFICER, BEWILDERED BY THE NEWEST TRAGEDY...
YOU BRING PAGE HERE! AND DON'T LET ANYONE SPOIL THE SINGLE SET OF TRACKS LEADING HERE FROM THE HOTEL!
A FEW MOMENTS LATER...
YOU MEAN HE MURDERED YOUR PARTNER IN THE WOODS?? BUT YESTERDAY YOU SAID.....
I LIED TO PROTECT MYSELF! MORROW THREATENED MY LIFE IF I TOLD!
I WAS AFRAID OF HIM! KNEW HE WAS DESPERATE! THAT'S WHY I TOOK A ROOM AT THE HOTEL! POOR MORROW, HE TOOK THE EASIEST WAY OUT!
THEN YOU DIDN'T COME BACK HERE LAST NIGHT?
HOW COULD I WITHOUT LEAVING TRACKS?
THAT, MY MURDEROUS FRIEND, IS OPEN TO QUESTION!
I ARREST YOU FOR MURDER!
BECAUSE... MORROW CAME HERE FROM THE HOTEL JUST AS IT STARTED TO SNOW! AND IT SNOWED FOR HOURS AFTER! HIS TRACKS WOULD BE COMPLETELY COVERED BY NOW!
YOU HAVEN'T ONE SHRED OF EVIDENCE AGAINST ME!
HAVEN'T I? SUPPOSE I TELL YOU HOW CLEVERLY YOU SET THE SUICIDE, AND YOU CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG?
6

YOU, AFRAID THAT MORROW WOULD CRACK, CAME HERE SOME TIME NEAR DAWN TO KILL HIM! YOU STRANGLED HIM WITH THE SAME ROPE YOU USED TO HANG HIM FROM THE RAFTER! THEN CLEVERLY PLACED AN OVER-TURNED CHAIR BENEATH HIM TO MAKE IT APPEAR HE HAD KICKED IT OVER!

THEN... PUTTING ON MORROW'S BOOTS AND CARRYING YOUR OWN, YOU WALKED BACK-WARDS TO THE HOTEL, LEAVING THE SINGLE TRACK! AND THE PROOF IS... MORROW'S BOOTS FOUND IN YOUR ROOM!


THE $100,000 JOINT INSURANCE POLICY WILL PROVE YOUR MOTIVE! TAKE HIM AWAY, SHERIFF... WHAT?
NOT YET, YOU DON'T!
SUDDENLY...
OOFFF!
WITH LIGHTENING SPEED, THE KILLER WHIPS A GUN FROM THE FALLEN SHERIFF...
THIS IS MY CHANCE!
OOO! MY HEAD!


MISS AMERICA RALLIES HER SCATTERED SENSES TO ACT SWIFTLY AND INSTINCTIVELY AS THE KILLER DELIBERATELY PLACES HIS WEAPON TO HER TEMPLE...
YO-OW-FFF!!
WHEW! THE POWDER SINGED MY HAIR! JUST GOT MY HEAD AWAY IN TIME!

ONCE ON HER FEET, MISS AMERICA CUTS SHORT THE KILLER'S FUTILE ATTEMPT AT FURTHER RESISTANCE...
CATCH HIM, SHERIFF! HE'S ALL YOURS FROM NOW ON!
The End—

MARVEL MYSTERY COMICS

SEPTEMBER NO. 66

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